



From the Board Room

ACTIVITIES OF THE NC BOARD OF EDUCATION

AUGUST 2014

The State Board of Education is comprised of the State Treasurer, the Lieutenant Governor and 11 citizens appointed by the Governor. This newsletter highlights the Board's activities on behalf of the 1.5 million public school children in our state and the more than 100,000 educators who provide services to children. View all State Board of Education member and advisor information online at <https://eboard.eboardsolutions.com/AboutUs/AboutUs.aspx?S=10399&TID=1>. To access current and archived versions of From the Boardroom, visit <http://stateboard.ncpublicschools.gov/> and select the "SBE Newsletter" tab.

HIGH SCHOOL GRADE CALCULATION CHANGES

General Statute 116.11 requires grade-point averages and class ranks be calculated by a standard method devised by the institutions of higher education. The UNC Board of Governors and the NC Community Colleges Board recently approved a new weighting policy for grade-point average calculation; at its August meeting, the State Board of Education approved revisions to its grade-point average to include these changes from institutions of higher education. Beginning with the Freshman Class of 2015, honors courses will carry a maximum of 4.5 points for an "A," and any college-level course (AP, IB, community college, university) will carry a maximum of 5 points for an "A."

Since calculations will be changing, the State Board also will be considering a revision to the grading scale policy. At its September meeting, the Board will begin discussions around a 10-point scale as well as one consistent statewide scale. Currently, some districts use plus/minus options for grades and some do not, and there is interest in standardization for consistency across the state. School district leaders have been asked to provide input on a possible 10-point scale with no plus/minus option. Any changes to the grade-point scale for student grades would also begin with the ninth graders entering high school in the fall of 2015.

STATE AND NATIONAL SCHOOLS OF CHARACTER RECOGNIZED

Southern Guilford Middle, Colfax Elementary and Southwest Guilford Middle Schools were recognized at the Board meeting for being State and National Schools of Character. Southern Guilford High School was recognized as a State School of Character and as a National Honorable Mention School of Character. Board members noted that Guilford County Schools had done a great job of implementing a strong character education initiative in its schools.

National Schools of Character are schools and districts that have demonstrated through a rigorous evaluation process that character development has had a positive impact on academics, student behavior, and school climate. These schools serve as models for other schools, helping them to achieve the same results and enjoy the distinction of a National School of Character for 5 years. This program is sponsored by the Character Education Partnership.

EXCELLENT MATH AND SCIENCE TEACHERS RECOGNIZED

State Board members recognized and applauded a group of outstanding mathematics and science teachers this month. Six teachers were recognized as 2013 North Carolina finalists for the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching. In mathematics, grades 7-12, they are: Brian Frees, Hendersonville Middle School, Henderson County Schools; Julie Riggins, East Forsyth High School, Winston-Salem/Forsyth County Schools; Katie Salter, West Carteret High School, Carteret County Schools. In science, grades 7-12, they are: Laura Lawrence, the Asheville School; Jeff Milbourne, NC School of Science and Mathematics; Mark Townley, Holly Springs High School, Wake County Schools.

Also recognized were the 2012 NC recipients of the Presidential Awards for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching: Tonya Kepley, an elementary math teacher at Enochville Elementary School, Rowan-Salisbury Schools; and Teresa Cowan, an elementary science teacher at Charles D. Owen Middle School, Buncombe County Schools.



Tonya Kepley, 2012 National Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching for Mathematics



Teresa Cowan, 2012 National Presidential Award for Excellence in Mathematics and Science Teaching for Science

SBE Highlights: A checklist of Board actions is posted every month immediately after the meeting's end. Access that at <http://stateboard.ncpublicschools.gov/minutes-actions/sbe-minutes/2014-minutes>. The State Board of Education's next meeting will be September 3-4 in Raleigh. Proceedings are audio streamed through the Board's meeting site. Go to ncpublicschools.org and click on the SBE Meetings in the top right corner of the page.